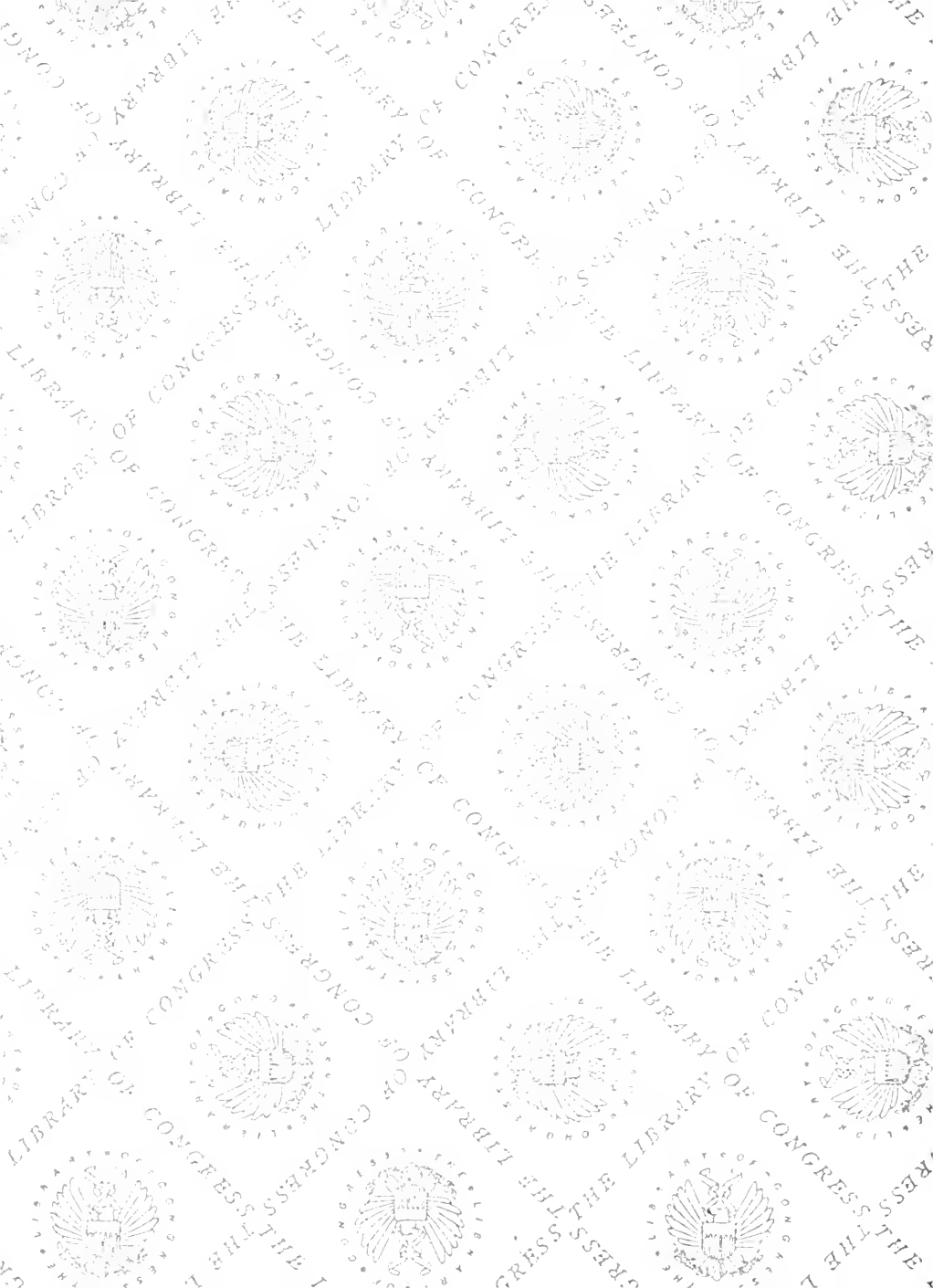
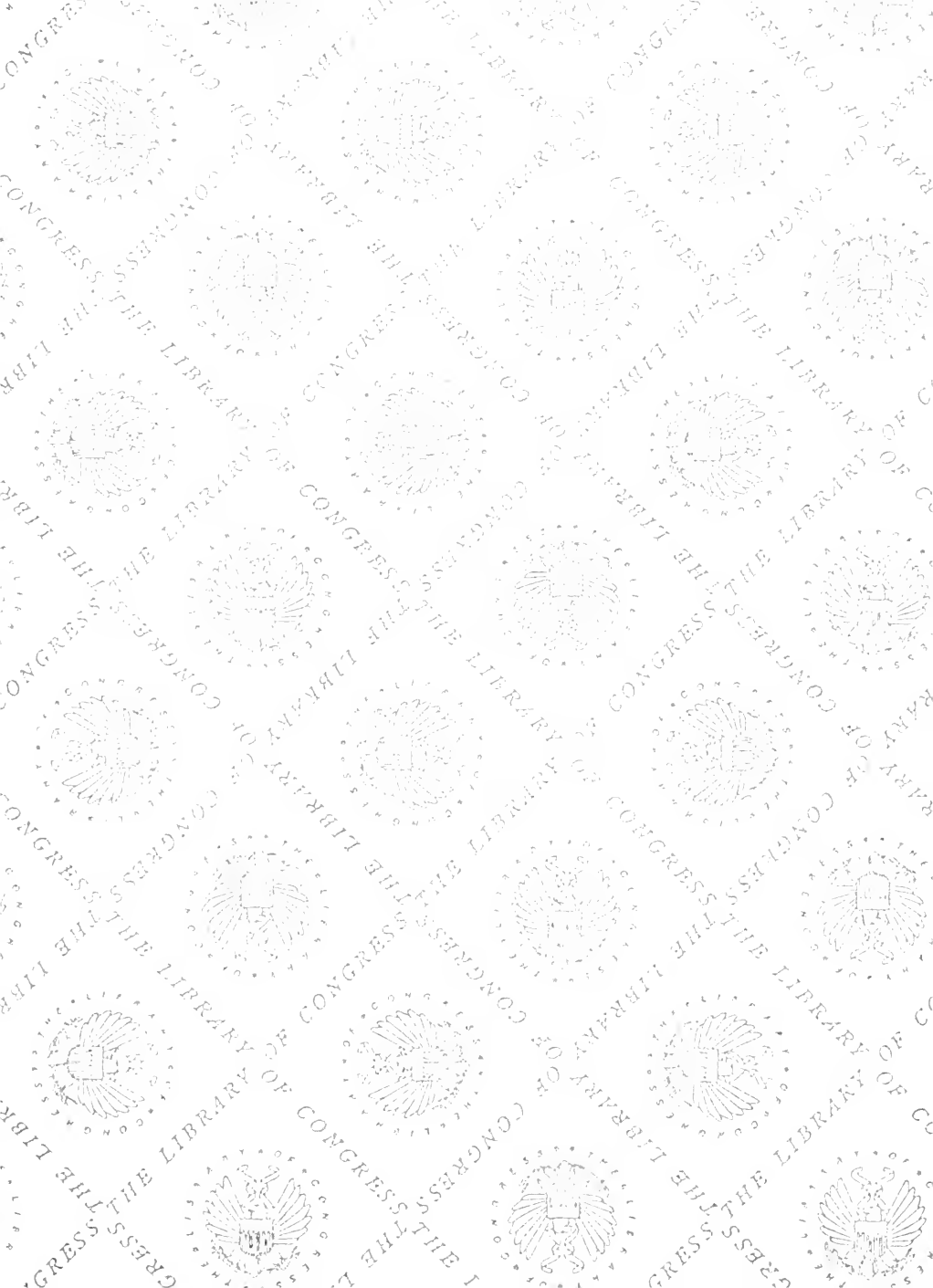


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1908





ROSALINE

BY B. M. BESHSHURE

“Go little book from this my solitude.

I cast thee on the waters—go thy ways!

And if, as I believe, thy vein is good,

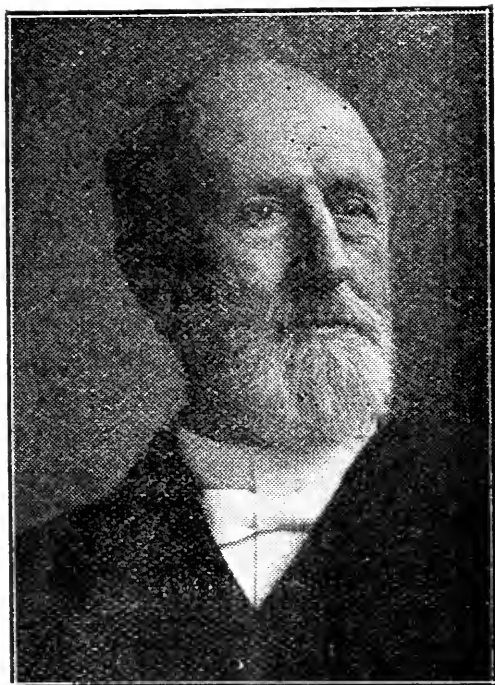
The world will find thee after many days.”

— *Byron*

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J. C. MELOY, D. D.



DEDICATORY

Dear Sir :

In you I found a heart that throbs with affection, a soul that flutters with peace and good will along the riotous fretting shore of life; in you I met a human that walks in the footsteps of the divine; in you I have found a friend.

Accept, I pray, these golden dreams of my youth, these rhythmic beats of my young heart, these sighs on the vanities of modern society, these aspiring hopes and wishes sung in the bosom of this glorious Republic.

Sincerely,

B. M. BESHSHURE

West Newton, Pa., June 1, 1908.

E R R A T A

Page 9, line 1. read "against" instead of 'gainst.

Page 14, line 27, read "bid me nearer" instead of bid nearer.

Page 14, line 28, read "lap" instead of lips.

Page 23, line 42, read "advance" instead of progress.

Page 31, line 18, read "utter" instead of outer.

Page 32, line 27, read "throbs" instead of thorbs.

Page 36, line 31, read "patriotism" instead of patrotism.

Page 35, line 40, read "success" instead of progress.

Page 47, line 18, read "the" instead of thy.

Rosaline

The sun was sinking in the west,
Emitting from his couch of death,
Soft crimson rays that lit the crests
Of yon high tufted hills that swoop'd
Along the moaning, rocky, shore;
And lent the eve more awe, and wrapt
Within their dales a nightly gloom.

There was a fire within the clouds;
There was a fire beyond the hills;
There was a raging fire in our
Young hearts as we together moved
Along the shore, from rock to rock,
Her hand in mine, my heart in hers—
Both flying on the wings of love
Two beings—one soul, one heart, one mind,
Each being the other's world and life.
The air he breathes, and the light
That guides him and the gentle heart
That throbs within his heaving breast.
And beats a music known to love.

Enchanted, and bewilder'd by
The grandeur of that golden eve,
We lastly settled on a rock
Just by a pretty little cove,
Where weaklings of the dreadful sea,
And wee young fishes swarmed around,
And found a refuge peaceful, safe,
That shelter'd their little, harmless lives,
And free from cares, they jostled about,
And sparkled in that shaded cove
Like little pearly stars of night.

She sat beside me, fair, divine,
Voluptuously adding to
The beauty of the scenes around
And shared my silence and my dreams.
I gazed upon the heaving main,
And gazed upon her brilliant eyes,
In whose profoundness I did loose
My heart, my soul, my life, my all.
My sobbing and my tears could not
Quell that love tempest within me.
I dropped into the fath'mless depth,
My dreams, my fancies and my cares,
That with the plashing, murmur'ing tide
Beat 'gainst the rocks, and in the cove,
Both died out 'neath her sacred feet.

O! happy and rueful hour that passed,
And buried itself deep in the clasps
Of love adventures and love haps!
Come back to me! Oh! back to me.
All nature twit me of thy grief
That, mixed with a voluptuous joy,
Shakes all the bonds of heart and soul,
And leaves the lover, smiling, sad,
And to the mercy of the tears.

The sun sat down behind the hills,
And twilight followed, and the gloom,
The faded gloom, that usher'd the night,
Reign'd o'er the ocean and the shore,
And nature, dreamless, slept beneath.
The wind was calmed into a breeze,
Fresh, cheering, and melodious, too.
The waves quelled down to ripples mild,
And silence, deep, all over reign'd,
Save in our hearts that louder beat.

The darkness made us oftener gaze,
And gaze more ardently upon
Each other, fearing lest the gloom
Would hide us both behind her screen.

But love, a power that holds a sway
O'er nature, and reforms her laws.
Showed her fair face more bright and fair
More gentle, more attractive, and
The crimson rays that linger'd still
Above the dark horizon lent
Her cheeks a faded hue divine.
Her golden ringlets veered and swayed
And flutter'd with the breeze and cast
Faint shadows on her white forehead
That looked like ocean shaded with
The shadows of the evening clouds.

The day grew paler, darker, and
The twilight crept into the night
That hid beneath its sullen wings
All things and silenc'd time and life.
I summon'd my shatter'd senses, and
With a reverential spirit looked
At that fair angel by my side,
That with a halo bright was crowned.
I saw her tearful—and her tears
Were glistening, dropping in her lap
And running there in runnels fast,
And rivulets with murmur sweet.

O! What a doleful tempest broke
And stirred the elements in my heart.
I drew little nearer to her side,
I clasped her gentle pretty hand,
And quivering, knelt and stammer'd words
That meant more worship than did love.

She turned to me, a ravishing being
Whose silence e'en was plenitude
To my repining, famished heart.

Distracted with our love and hopes
And fancies and love's ecstasy,
We totter'd in each others' arms,
And sighed, and sobbed, and wept and washed

Our cheeks with kisses and with tears—
The souvenirs of Parting Day,
Viaticum of murder'd love.

The scintillating stars began
To wan and loose themselves in space.
The hills assumed a silv'ry hue
As their crests toward the bright'ning east
Were towering gigantically.
The queen of night sat on her throne,
And darkness fled before the moon,
Who rose with all her heavenly sheen
To solemnize our parting eve.

We were still by the sacred rock
That witnessed our sad last farewell;
And were, upon its sacred breast,
Invoking all the bliss of heaven,
And heaping there our warmest love.
We both knelt down in sight of all
The wakening powers of heaven and earth,
That all with hark'ning ears and hearts,
Dismayed by that sad touching scene,
Cast down o'er us a solemn gaze.
And as I felt her hand in mine
And saw her kneeling by my side
With eyes, uplifted, utt'ring soft
Her sweet, sweet prayer of love; I felt
As if my heart and all were blown
Off on her charming, madd'ning looks
To some far region of the skies,
To those dense groupings of the stars
That aren't but glances from her eyes.

It was then chilly, and the dew
Was forming on the scarpèd rocks,
And on the sands and gravels we trod
And making them wet, slippery.
The sharp, loud, monotonous sound
Of insects and the harsh loud croak
Of toads, and murmur of the waves,

That quietly broke 'gainst the rocks,
Were filling our ears and filling the shore,
And echoing in our broken hearts
An awe combined with dread and fear.
We travell'd homeward, speechless, mute,
And frenzied by the morrow's cares,
And pond'ring o'er the happy past,
And o'er the barren future days,
And wishing that night would but expand
Itself into eternity.

How sweet it was to gaze at her,
And fill up my poor wretched heart
With her divine, immaculate grace;
And sweeter still to shut mine eyes
And contemplate her radiancy,
That in my bleak and dreary heart
Did shed the rays of paradise.
Or to come closer to her side
And touch her pretty tidy dress,
At which cohabitation, I
Did shudder like an autumn leaf.
She was more than a friend to me,
So her I pledged all love I had;
She was more than a sister dear,
So, her, embraced most dearly
And said, fair Rosaline, beloved,
Have pity on my sighs and tears;
Have pity on the heart that thou
With golden chains of love hast bound
And kept in bondage at thy feet.
O, keep him yet lest he should die!
O, do not leave me, dear, to go
Where neither I nor my night dreams,
Nor my bereft and darken'd hopes
Can reach a smile, or bitter tear!

She all suffused with blushes turn'd
Her violet eyes, whose glances shone
More bright than all the silv'ry rays
That poured down from the glorious moon
And danced upon her golden cheeks:

Then utter'd a sigh whose ravishing warmth
Commingle'd with the bounteous wave
Of her commotioned, sadden'd breast
Did bring me nearer to my grave.
Ah, happy hour! when she did break
The silence and into my ears
She whisper'd her sweet words and said:
"Beloved, thou cleft my heart in twain,
Where cherish I a love for thee,
That time nor fate can e'er subdue,
Nor distance canker or decrease.
Ask those dim stars of night how oft
I watched them on my sleepless nights;
Ask that bright lapsing moon if she
E'er met on her long endless course.
But fragrant, faithful, silent prayers
That my fond heart breathed up for thee;
Or hear the moaning deep repeat
As it enfolds her favorite beach,
My yearning to thy sweet old side.
I'm bound to leave thee for a time,
For Marg'ret, whom you know, so kind,
Our dear old friend to me dispatched
A message, with a cordial call
To spend these summer's months with her
In Paris, where at present she stays.
She tells me of a jolly time
They have, of all the social clubs,
Of balls and dances which the Counts
And Lords and barons do attend
And make the gath'rings glitter with
Their jovial spirits and their golds.
There's now a chance for me to quote
The latest fashions and the rules
Of etiquette and modern styles
At their congenial grand abode.
Our land is flooded with all these,
And our esteemed magnates have all
Recoursed to them and gave to them
Their best attention and their hearts.
I wish, beloved, you could spare
A time, along with me to go,

But oh, how oft our best desires
Betray the heart that gave them birth,
And wrap it o'er with endless hopes."

I felt a violent horrible shock
Within my soul, that was to bid
Her last farewell to peace and life;
And felt as if my breath was lost,
And ghastly silence grappled my tongue.
The city lights came to our sight,
And glitter'd through the sluggish air,
Breaking away the spell of night.
The hum and hubbub in the streets;
The noise of traffic and of life
Were looming louder in our ears.
We passed the precincts, plunged into
The wide and narrow streets and lanes
And passed the thickest thoroughfares,
Yet heedless of the hottest rush
And closest jostling of the crowd.
Our path expired at last, and lo!
Upon a gently sloping knoll
We stood, beside a wicket gate
On which the ivy wove her leaves
And flowers cluster'd dewy gay.
There Rosaline went in, alone,
Caressing those tame plants that bent
Their foliage round her gentle arms.
I watched her glancing back at me.
I watched her stalk in gracefully
And quietly across the yard,
Then through the door that she unlocked.
My strength gave way I tottered down.
I lied upon the chilly grass
And grappled the lattice of the fence.

The moon had climbed high in the heavens,
Shone down on dales and nooks and brooks,
And bathed in her soft balmy rays
• The rose, the bud, the leaf, the twig
The rampant thicket and the mound
On which her mansion quietly stood,

Amidst the most delicious charm
Of most enchanting summer nights.
A window in the lower floor
Was oped, and there the silv'ry rays,
That pertly danced upon the blinds,
Poured in with balmy lavishment.
Lo! Rosaline, with all her grace
And captivating looks appeared.
With yearning heart and ardent eyes.
Half screened with tears of piety,
I watched the moon of heavens salute
And hail her sister of the earth.
She laid her elbows on the sill,
And laid her cheeks upon her hands,
And there, more like an angel fair
That hails the world with peace, she stood,
And gazed on nature slumb'ring in
The vales and wakening in the skies;
And mused and mused, then stalked across
The room, then she showed up no more.
Not e'en the full moon's brilliant rays,
That struck and knelt down on the floor
In supplication near her bed,
Could show her shadow or her form.
And not until a while elapsed
Could I retrieve my shatter'd thoughts
And gain a strength to raise myself,
And stumble homeward down the slope.

My fancy, stirred with dismal hue
And tunes of sad and empty world,
Did peal on me and break my heart.
I planned to follow her abroad,
And ever be at her sweet side,
And ever look at her bright face,
And ever beg her looks, and bask
My heart in their benign sweet rays.
Then cares and hardships did assail
My plans, that seemed could not be swerved.
And duties called me back and chained
My aspirations and my dreams.
O heaven and earth! Has she indeed

For me in her chaste dewy breast
E'er cherished a love; or how could she
Let go an one like me who lived,
So solely, on her smiles and looks,
And far from her, so wretched he was
And little cared to live his life?
But didn't she say, she did; and what
A symphony, a bliss, her words
Did ring and echo in my ears?
Oh, yes; and she avowed it too.
"What ails thee, then, my heart?" I cried
"And what in heaven and on earth,
In life and in eternity,
For sweeter, gravest thou beside?"
"Remand thy passions, heart, and hold
Them in that golden leash of love
That her sweet lips to thee avowed."
A happy consolation did
Then flutter in my dismal breast,
And toppled down the loads of cares
That crushed the flower of my youth.
O, blessed confidence of love,
O, pilot of the trouble-tost,
O, anchor of the wavering hearts;
Akin to chaste young children trust
To worship of the Deity.
The road was rough'ning as I went,
And swerving to the right and left;
And leading me through tilth and groves,
Through thickets and through narrow creeks,
Up hill, down hill, by granges, folds,
By quarries and through shaded swamps,
Through many a hedge and thorny fence.
But gained the city streets at last.
And soon into my room I stepped
And locked up soon myself and plunged
In bed fatigued, disturbed, dismayed.
Now hopeful, now without a hope
With passions veering, here and there,
And fancies steering, far and wide,
And mem'ries sweet and mem'ries sad,
Stripped off my slumber, choked with sobs,

For she between my eyelids posed
And stole away my meager sleep.
The clock struck ten, then struck eleven,
Then round to twelve, then its click-clock
Died out within my ears, for lo!

I saw her in a garden, gay
With blossoms of the early spring,
While singing what could never sing
So sweetly all the linnets of May.

She was then sitting by a spring.
Her eyes bewitched the atmosphere,
The tiny plants and daisies were
Around her clasping in a ring.

The birds were sporting with sunshine,
Leaves rustling, water murm'ring, too,
And her sweet tunes were soaring through
The purple space to realms divine.

She seemed to me a being from heaven,
A part of nature's grandest themes;
I stood so dazzled in her beams,
But with her glance my hope was risen.

With throbbing heart I 'proached her side;
My tears were brimming, streaming out;
I laid my heart and life about
Her feet and spoke my prayers and sighed.

Another glance from her did charm
My soul and bid nearer pace.
In her sweet lips I hid my face,
And round my neck she laid her arm.

All things then changed; lo, there, I stood
Upon a cliff that tower'd high,
And loomed with me into the sky,
And kept me o'er my fate to brood.

Deep sighs and frets and furious roar
Were crowding all the valley's bed
From waters rushing down so red
As if were fed with human gore.

The threaten'd cliff opposed the act
Of its unappeasable mad foe
That, in its vehement furious flow,
Pour'd through its heart a cataract.

And howled at times with howling gusts
And filled the chasm with froth and spray
As its deep fathomless pathway
Was hewing through the rocky crust.

I sorrowed and did shudder with fear
As there I stood bereft, forlorn,
Deserted, broken down, lovelorn,
Who lost all things in love but tears.

There I called back love's vanished days,
Whose splendor did, of old, to me,
Eclipse time, life, eternity
And flood creation with his rays.

And pond'ring gazed upon the line
Of swooping hills around with grief,
And counted every falling leaf,
To every falling hope of mine.

No consolation, nay, all things
Around breathed horror and alarm;
The woods, the river, and the arm
Of fate that flung me on death's wings.

The sun then at mid heaven posed,
The trees half-stripped at autumn rounds
Cast slight little shadows on their grounds,
And all the forest's nooks exposed.

Lo! there beneath an aged tree
My Rosaline had smiling stood,
I leapt with joy and scarcely could
Appease the heart that throbbed in me.

I summon'd my strength to fly to her;
I hurried back and hurried forth;
I hurried wildly south and north;
But found I was imprison'd up there.

To jump! A death infernal in
The gorge's jaws, so ragged and stiff,
Yet bitterer death upon the cliff,
A death of yearning blazed within.

But suddenly from the forest's heart
Appeared a strange, suspicious beast
That grovell'd stealthily abreast,
Then on my Rosaline did dart;

And through the forest with her sped:
I shouted loud and wept and cried,
And wakening, on a tearful tide
I found me floating in my bed.

My heart was beating like a drum,
My breath was dashing like a wave;
And looked as if out of the grave
I, back to life and light did come.

Absorbed in fancies scorched and burnt
And shuddering still with horror fierce,
Made to the door and soon was off
With breathless hurry through the streets.
The sun had climbed high in the East,
Dispersing with his brilliant rays
The thick, dark morning mist and lent
The universe a joyous hue.
But all was dark within my heart
As on the depot's platform stood
I, summoning him with silent blush
To bid his angel sweet farewell.

Surrounded with her friends, and mates,
And relatives fair Rosaline
Came dressed up in a trav'ling suit,
And stalking like a goddess of old.
She had upon her breast a rose
Still damp with balmy morning dew;
And to her stylish hat was pinned
A beautiful bunch of violets.
But fairest, sweetest than all buds,
And blossoms and flowers of the spring,
Were her fair bonny cheeks and eyes
That dawned on me that parting morn.

A distant, deep, resounded roar
Did warn me of her train's approach;
A roar that billowed sadly in
The crypts and arches of my heart.
She looked around, and as her eyes
Met mine in wavering, solemn gaze,
She beckoned to me and stepped aside,
I followed in a humble pace,
And stood bewilder'd by her side.
She stretched her arm to me, and as
I pressed her hand in mine I felt
That all my sorrows cower'd and shrank,
And vanished, fading at her feet.
"Good-bye, beloved"! I mutter'd to her,
And when the quiet hours to come
Shall stir within thy youthful breast
The reminiscence of the past,
Recall a friend that cherished thee,
And plighted thee all love he had,
And pledged at thy love's sacred shrine
His heart, his life, his destiny."

Oh! there, panted the giant train,
As she bore down along the track,
And smoked and whistled thunder-like,
And flashed a hubbub in the crowd
That stirred and rushed up to the cars;
Then last of all beings followed I
With broken heart and pleading looks,

Helpless and tearful, mute, aghast,
And watched her going up the steps,
And watched the wheels and heard them screech,
And saw them glide along the rails,
And bear my sweetest life away.

* * *

From rock to rock, from shade to shade;
Alone with my ill fated heart;
From park to park, from haunt to haunt;
From brook to grove, to yard, to bower,
And seats of matchless, boundless joy,
Where we immortalized our love,
And our undreamt of wretchedness.
How tediously my days did crawl!
How sadly crept my eves and nights!
I spurned all social transient joys
And fled to nature's bosom, where,
I met a soothing, kind caress,
So sweet, eternal, and benign.
Where laid I down my grief and cares,—
Where I did tell my rueful tales;
For nature was a gentle friend
That cared to wipe my tears away.
And in the rustling of the leaves,
And in the murm'ring of its brooks,
It lulled the pangs that chafed my heart.
How oft, alone, upon the hills,
Or 'neath a stooping, archèd rock,
Or lying on the grassy lawns,
I dreamt my days from dawn to eve,
From early, pearly gleam until
The sunset blushing ceased to glare,
Revolving deep within my breast
The contemplations of my youth,
And ever grasping in my hands
Her beautiful picture that I loved,
And cherished like a relic of saints,
And gazing on and on until
The rolling tears did screen my eyes.
How oft I read out to the bright,
Attentive, silent skies the sweet
And tender, missives she had sent

To me from board her sailing ship;
In which she told me of her sad,
And lonely, tedious, gloomy hours;
Of all her longings, once again,
Upon this happy shore, to stand,
To tread upon the beautiful soil
Of her free, glorious fatherland;
And read them o'er and o'er until
Their sweet, harmonious echo could
Be heard reverberated by
The mould'ring ruins of my heart.

One blithesome morning of the spring
When verdure clothed the meads and vales;
After a drizzling shower past
And left behind upon the grass,
And on the leaflets of the trees,
Bright drops of rain that spangled like
Little pearly stars in sky of green.
That morn I left out for my haunts
Still worried by the old, old cares,
And sighing still my favorite sighs
That time for them had made a path
Within the archives of my breast;
And made them sound more deep and sad.
I was more restless, more dismayed,
Despondent than ever before;
For since a tedious, great long lapse
Of time she had not written me;
And so forgotten by her felt
I was upon this dreadful earth
A sheer exile without a home,
Without a cheerful ray of light.
That morn I had a letter from her,
The which I hugged a thousand times,
But oh, to my all ruining despair
It told an alter'd, false, base heart
That reared an utter faithless love.
I clenched her message in my fist
And gnashed my teeth with anguish that
Drove out my fancy, frantic, wild.
I lost my way and dived amidst
The shrubs and brambles in the woods,

And roved astray till suddenly came
To a big tree that stood upon
A grassy solitary lawn.
I sat me down in its thick shade
And mused and ponder'd and recalled;
And wept more tears than ever did.
"Forbid it, Heaven!" shouted I,
"Forbid it thou great God of Heaven.
O, Rosaline's kind, noble heart:
Forgive it. Oh! Forgive it all"!
I blushed with stinging sad remorse,
My eyes were filled and clouded thick,
My breast was choked, my breath withheld
I sobbed and wept so bitterly.
Dear Rosaline, that sacred being,
Her words that chanted earth and heaven:
Her simple, noble heart that bloomed
Beneath the sky of this free land,
Have changed into a mockery,
And she into a mere coquette!

"What ails thee, lad?" A soft low voice
Rang in my ears, I turned my face,
Lo! there behind me stood a man
With stately figure crowned with all
The chaste and snowy glow of age.
That leaning on his staff approached
My side and took his seat upon
The bed of grass. He laid his staff
Upon his trembling succumbed knees
And patted pertly with its tip
His chobby-hairy, huge old dog
That felt the quiet, comely spell
Of his old master's gravity,
And quietly lied beside him, and
There gnarled those breezy hours away.
"What raked that fire in thee, young man?"
Resumed the old man, turning his
Dim foibled eyes askew at me.
"What turned thee wild and made thee spurn
Society to haunt the woods?
What made thy tears so glibly flow,

And thy young heart so wildly heave?
Are all the consolations and
The graces of God's heaven o'er done?
Has God used up all his sweet peace?
Brace up, O, passionate, tender lad!
For sorrow is a double sin:
A crime 'gainst nature and a crime
Against the great Creator, God.
All eddy'ng sobs and rolling tears
Can ne'er restore the flying past,
While cheer will make the present worth
A thousand past, a thousand fold."

And when he paused a while to gain
His breath and pat his slumb'ring dog,
I raised my head and gazed at him
With eyes half dried up of their tears
At his caressing, helpful words:
Then suddenly broke again in sobs
As a dear thought had flutter'd by
The gateways of my mind, and leapt
Away across the gorgeous skies
With dear love memories on its wings.
"Break down that grasp of hopeless grief."
He added, with compassionate tune:
"Thy looks, thy sighs and tears do all
To me betray and tell a love."
"Nay, more they tell a love, betrayed."
Sobbed I, with quiv'ring, broken voice.
"A maiden whom I loved, my sire,
A maiden sweet and chanting, whom
I worshipped next to the divine.
She had the charm of muses and
Upon her virginic cheeks and lips
A lavishing rosy flush of youth
E'er glowed with blithesome chastity.
Her hair possessed the color of gold
And was like those soft ruddy rays
That falter in the sunset skies,
And garland heaven and champion day.
Her eyes, blue as the summer sky,
Had cheer'd the gloomiest darkest souls

And set the calmest heart on dreams,
And with their cheerful, balmy rays
Dried up the tears of time and fate.
She was as gay and cheerful as
The robin in the month of May.
She had the prudence of the sage
And had the mind of Socrates.
Beneath the sky of this land she
Thrived as the lily of the field,
And was at home a mountain nymph,
A rose through winter and through spring.
Together to the same school went;
And sat together at one desk;
And daily when the school was o'er
Her books I carried home for her.
She learned about the Saviour Christ,
She learned of God in nature, and
She studied nature and her laws,
And traced through countless ages life
In all its stages and its growth.
She read of saints and patriots
And heroes of the days of yore,
And learned to walk in their footsteps.
She had all that was to her sex
Denied all o'er the world of man.

They tell me we were born in May,
The same day, almost the same hour,
Out in our suburban cottage homes
Amidst the flowers and at the song
Of birds and tinkling of the brooks.
We grew so much together and
Our prattling infancy gave way
To joyous, playful childhood and
To friendliest companionship.
We used to join the neighbors' tots
And share them their playthings and toys,
And join them in their outings, and
Together hop on meads and fields.
I always followed by her side,
And she did always shed a bright
And happy smile along my path.

I picked her all the flowers she liked
And never failed to deck her breast
With roses that did match her cheeks;
And pin to her gay golden hair
The dewy tufts of hyacinth.
I had a satisfaction sweet,
And doubtless in obeying her will
I often wished her to suggest
To me some errand or some deed.
I asked her once if she desired
Me chase a gaudy butterfly
That lighted on a twig nearby.
"No, thanks," replied she with a smile,
"Let him enjoy his life, for I
Do hate all pleasures that would cause
Somebody else's misery."
So frankly, sweetly utter'd she
Those words that did her heart bespeak,
And did my heart with virtue touch.
So deep in my young soul they were
Impressed that now they sound so fresh
As if were told but yesterday:
For we, my sire, are simply what
Our maidens' hearts want us to be.
Whene'er I missed her, but one day
I grieved and felt my heart ablaze.
Whene'er I wept naught soothed my heart
Save her sweet looks, and gentle hand
That wiped my "precious" tears away.
(She always called them precious, alas!)
And brought my cheeks in touch with hers,
And with her bounteous, radiant smile
Reflected glorious, sparkling hues
That ne'er a sun could form on rains.
No milder passions later years
Could introduce into our hearts.
The innocent simplicity
Of childhood passed to blushing youth.
'Tis true we lessen'd frequency
To our dear haunts and rendezvous.
'Tis true we were less seen together
But naught could thwart our love's progress

Or could abate our eddying zeal.
Nay! came we to a fuller sense
Of our unique attachment and
Produced 'more tears, more sighs, more love.
The sunny days of summer to us
More charm than ever did portend.
The birds sang sweeter and the flowers
In deeper tacit eloquence
Addressed our throbbing, spell-bound hearts.
The brightness of the outer world
Was blended with the inner joy
And sweet felicity of love,
And made our youth a grace, a bliss.
So fair and charming Rosaline
Was looming in my charmed eyes,
That oft I wonder'd whether God
Could e'er create an angel like
Herself, for she, oh she, did stand
The masterpiece of Deity.
Was that belief of mine a trance?
Was it a fancy or a whim?
That love did picture to my mind,
My heart, my senses and my soul?
But let that be whate'er it might
I know (and don't want know no more)
It ruled my thoughts; it governed my life;
It formed my most resplendent dreams;
It sensitized my stolid heart;
It purified my youth and set
My soul on path of piety.

One day we climbed upon the hill
Whose sumptuous verdure and whose wide
Untrammell'd lovely sceneries
Did oft attract us and infuse
Great happiness into our hearts;
Simplicity into our thoughts,
And loftiness into our love.
We called that hill the "Thur of Youth,"
It was so dear to Rosaline
(And certainly as dear to me)
That many a time she dreamt of it

And told to me those dreams of her
Pure heart that harmonized in my
Attentive ears like tales of heaven.
That day was glorious, clear and bright.
We had with us our favorite books;
As then we planned to lull the hours
With pretty poems and with songs.
I had "The Works of Robert Burns,"
That never left my pocket; she had
Great Byron's "Hours of Idleness."
So cheering was the eastern breeze
That swept the ocean's purple stretch
And whisper'd through the orchards and
Rose up to us so fragrant fresh.
Taking Burns' precious booklet I
Read out his "Highland Mary" to
Her, and she shared my sighs and wept
While leaning on my arm her cheeks.
She made me oft repeat that song;
But seeing how the Scottish lovelorn
Made her emotion stir so wild,
I paused at last and cheered her up
By loving consolations and
By earnest, prayerful words of love.
"My Rosaline," said I, when she
Had her old cheerful mood resumed,
"A song! You've always been so kind."
She paused a moment then broke out
The silence that o'erwhelmed our hearts,
With most melodious, cheering tunes
That ever swelled 'neath azure skies.
Oh! gloomy is the human heart
That never dreamt his youthful dreams,
And worthless is the life that ne'er
Did worship in the shrine of love!
The sweetest happiest dreams of youth
Did then possess our hearts, my sire.
"Rise up," she said to me in one
Of those energetic tunes that
Characterize the daughters of
This land when 'roused by duty's call
Or moved to do their master's will.

"Rise up, let us be true, beloved,
To God and virtue, as to love.
I heard my mother talk last night
Of a poor family that dwells
In yon house by the railroad track,
Of a sick mother, and a child,
All whose incessant labor does
Not e'en purchase their daily food.
Our visit might prove a blessing to them;
We might bring cheer to their sad hearts."
So off with unremitting zeal
We went, no briers or thorns, no slopes
Or ragg'd rocks could tire her down
Or check my watchful care of her.
The sun shone down with scorching heat
And made us crave the pleasant hours
We had upon the breezy hill.

It was lunch time in that little cot,
A piece of cheese, a loaf of bread
Laid on a table gnawed with age,
Did represent the family's meal.
There was a stir within the cot,
The son had then come home from work,
Had on the table laid his meal
(The simple poor same old meal) and
Was helping his ill mother to **share**
His food and living to live with him
And dying they together die.
"May heaven bless thee, my son," the old,
Half paralyzed, gaunt mother said,
As he had braced her in her chair
And gave her half his bread and cheese.
"May God, the Father of all good,
The Giver of all gifts, grant you,
My son, His all-abiding grace,
And shield your path and fill your sheds
With corn, and fill your home with peace:
For He won't pass His children by
Or fail to help them at their need
Or ever mock a mother's tear."

There was quite an estrangement when
Fair Rosaline stood at the door
And hailed them with angelic smile.
They never speculated on
A visit like that or they ne'er dreamt
That men of wealth and glittering gold
Were made like them of common clay.
The mother whose tears soaked up her bread,
The son whose cares choked up his heart,
Both were amazed and kept aghast
And silent for a lapse of time,
As if of their poor means ashamed.
Encourag'd by Rosaline's kind words
And her sweet smiles, they brightened up
And welcomed us with generous hearts.
They offer'd their chairs to us, but we
Took seats upon a bench and had
Them both resume their lunch the while,
Fair Rosaline kept teaching them
And telling them the words of God
And tales of sweet and soothing truth
That were from her fair rosy lips
Told out with double grace and charm.
When lunch was o'er she helped the sick
Old mother to her bed and laid
In her lap all the coins she had
And hugged her with a kind embrace.
How touching! were the mother's looks,
That wander'd all around the cot—
From empty cupboard toward her son,
From Rosaline up toward her God—
And muttered out just one soft prayer
Afloat o'er tears of gratitude.
O! ye, all men of gold and wealth
Who own the trophies of this world
Have ye e'er tasted poverty
Or cared to see the suffering poor?
Have ye descended from your high
And breezy halls to visit those homes
Where men with souls like yours reside?
If not, dear friends, then do it now.

The years rolled on and Rosaline
Left school, my sire, and faced the great,
Wide, outer, tempting world and got
In closer contact with her friends
And shared society its fads.
And gave to foreign vanities
Her heart that was as pure as snow.
'Tis not yet a full, gloomy year
Since to the old world she has crossed.
Alas! all those celestial gifts
With which our nation vies the world,
All that high breeding totter'd down,
And worshiped vanity beneath
Her French colossal cenotaph.
Whose shadow mars Christianity.

I could no more bear up to tell
To him those woes and sad details;
I hid within my hands my face
And sobbed with a heart-rending grief.
Moved by my pitiful tears he 'proached
To me and by his gentle words
And soothing consolation my
High eddying grief abated, thence
I raised my eyes and looked at him
With a reverential, thankful glance,
And from his half-closed, half-ope'd eyes
That age enfeebled by his strain
I saw two glistening, silent tears
So slowly rolling down the folds
And wrinkles of his trembling cheeks;
Then heard them tinkle in his lap.
I realized, I felt his love,
And his kind interest in me,
I felt my sorrows shared by him.

"She gave me up," continued I.
"And did her fatherland eschew.
She spurned the simple, honest love,
And shunned to dwell in sacred hearts
And be a goddess in a shrine;
And chose to dwell within the walls

Of mould'ring, crumbling castles of yore,
And be a captive and a slave.
She gave a 'busted' count her hand,
And bowed with solemn oath her head
To decked grave-like hypocrisy.
O God, God what a dream absurd,
An empty drum, a chimera,
A loathsome burden, hateful task,
A worthless bauble, and a jest,
Appeal to me this life of mine!
How can I live while my dear heart
Departed and within my breast,
Left aught but pangs disquietude
And mould'ring ruins of a, once,
Fair, gay and flourishing paradise,
But now a barren, desolate waste,
An herbless, budless, springless life,
A surging sea, a lump of death."

I then with jealous anguish, wild,
Threw down myself upon the ground
And aimed to tear then myself up.
"Don't sin against just heaven, poor lad,"
Cried he while in his fondling arms
Embraced me fainting in his lap.

When next I ope'd my eyes I was
Laid down upon a bed of grass,
Beneath a tuft of hanging rocks,
And gales from rustling trees nearby
Were blowing life into my veins.
His dog was guarding by my side;
Now snarling, barking sullenly;
Now sniffing about with eager watch,
Or licking lovingly my hands,
And shaking soberly his tail.
I raised my head and looked around;
There was no human to be seen.
My clothes were wet and so my hair,
And so the trodden grassy bed.
When seeing me restored to life
The speechless dog leapt wild with joy.

And rushed amidst the bushes down
The slope to break the happy news
To his compassionate human friend,
Who in a little while appeared,
Escorted by that faithful dog
And carrying in his hat, along,
Cold water from the bubbling spring.
I rose up and toward him I sped
And thanked him in a cordial tone
And words dictated by a heart
That felt immortal gratitude.
I took the hat from him and meant
To spill its contents on the ground.
He got it back and watering a
Sere little with'ring plant he said
'Ne'er fail, young man, to shed a smile
And scatter sunshine where'er you go,
For life conceals within its folds
More misery, more darkened hearts
Than e'er we thought of or divined,
For in that smile and that sunshine,
A weary, haggard soul may bathe
And find an everlasting bliss.
Oh, when on my inspection tour,
This morn, I left my lonely home
And found thee 'neath that aged tree
That rears its head beyond the hill,
And saw thee moaning, dank with tears;
Thy loneliness, thy looks all told
The world to move and pass thee by,
And let thee wail thy life away.
I felt more sorrow than could bear.
And to thy notice hence I stepped
And did accost thee to thy grief.
For I, young man, was brought up in
An age in which humanity
Was ne'er from its own self estranged.
An age in which all forms of wealth
And vain pastimes of life were for
The peace that human souls infuse
Each into each, poor substitutes.
Oh, what a flatt'ring, shameful and

Erratic, tantalizing whim,
Oh, what a selfish, wrong belief
Appeals to me a certain creed
That rules the spirit of this age.
A whim that placed impassable bars
Amidst our social human race;
That made the social ties so loose
And shame to gloat o'er selfish aims;
And man to curse his brother man,
That hid his faults behind a screen
Of crimeful, wicked, self-interest
Which he misterned a lawful war
And a survival of the fit.
An abominable wrong that would
Drive off its maker wildly mad,
If he from his old grave would rise
To judge the fakers of his laws.
It cast not few to outer despair.
It turned good many wild as beasts;
It ruined well-meaning, zealous souls."

And having squeezed up his wetted hand
Picked up his staff, and coming to
A sunny spot he placed it there
To dry up in the high-day sun.
I watched him with an earnest gaze,
Amazed of his uncommon zeal,
Despite all his decrepitude.
"My sire," I said as he stooped down
To take a soft seat by my side,
'How can I e'er repay you for
Thy care of me that does surpass
All great rewards all human gifts?"
"By never mentioning it, young man,
By living up to Heaven's commands
And never sinning as you did
Against the sacred Christian peace.
By casting all thy troubles away."
"Is there a sinning in pure love?"
Cried I, raising my sunken face:
"Is there an error and a crime
In what the Heavenly Father breathed

Within our human hearts, my sire?
In what the whole creation moves
And has its most harmonious being?
A crime? An error? You say, sir,
Of what God, Himself, is? A fake?
Of that most actual virtue that
Does make religion possible?"
"Forbid it, God! That e'er I should
Deny what nature all around,
With sweetest, truest, echoes proclaims!
Deny what my corporeal sense
In soundest truth conveys to me;
What I do hear, do breathe and touch,
And do behold in earth and sky
And all the nooks of existence.
From that little wee seed in the field
To those gigantic worlds that whirl
In space; but this does manifest
A wholly different phase, young man.
What makes the good, a good, is not
A virtue in itself, inheres
As much as 'tis the way applied.
For bad in virtuous hands may turn
Out good while ignorance does make
Of good a venom and a curse.
I praise the love in thee, young man,
I praise thy faithful heart that thorbs
With sweetest, fond affection, but
Do hesitate if to pronounce
It a consistent, wholesome love.
It far excells that ravenous sort
That governs the motives of this age;
That base, ignoble, sordid lust
So flirting, so seditious, that
Does gloat o'er virtue's sweetest flowers
Disguised in love habilaments;
E'en in an age like this that claims
A reaching toward the true ideal.

"We are not made to weep and mourn,
We have a nobler aim in view;
'Tis true, all sorrow emanates

From tender, faithful, loving hearts,
From souls replete with meekness and
Abounding with docility,
But ne'er devoid of hopelessness
Which mars the pure implicit trust
That binds the human and divine,
Wherein love giving birth to grief,
And grief to undivine despair,
Religion suffers in their strife,
And gives discredit to the heart.
Wherein, young man, affections, while
Are boasting o'er the lustful love
Had climbed too high and fell.
But I would rather see the race
Climb high and fall and climb and fall
Than see him ravishing in his lust
Down by the morbid foot of time.

"Pluck out this thorn of sorrow from
Thy heart and fill thy days with good;
Go teach the erring world to spurn
That noxious most pernicious lust
That has been cank'ring human life,
And has been making man a beast,
And love a wretched infamy,
A curse for youth, a desp'rate code
That mesmerized the will of man.

"Like a sweet spectral strain his words
Rang in that quiet vale and pealed
Up through the billowy foliage of
The heaving, rustling trees, and struck
Harmonious quivers in my veins.
I felt he was the ghost of peace
On earth; the conduit of God's truth."
"Will then this age that swarms with true
And marked progress be doomed?" said I.
"Yes, to some marked extent, for that
Bright light that has for man dispelled
The gloom of ignorance has cast
A dark profile upon his soul,
In which he hid his worldly loot.

The virtues of this age, young man,
Are numerous, but oh, how oft!
Its gay society displays
So much of riotous living and
So much corruption that would shame
The vilest ages of the past.
'Tis e'en in this our glorious land,
This land on whose free blessed soil,
Beneath whose starlit loving skies
The weary, haggard souls of all
The human race a refuge seek.
This land that stands for truth and love.
For freedom and morality,
Has been polluted and defamed;
It has been bowing down its head;
And has accepted what it had
Eschewed and cursed in days of yore.
And there the East now scoffs and jeers
The West; and there the broken down,
Decrepit old does fool the new.
Look to the myriad evils that
Has flooded to this land in shape
Of desp'rate aimless, reckless life
Of luxury, of vanity.
Observe our wealthy potentates,
How they've to despotism recoured;
How they are smoth'ring virtue's cry;
How they are copying revelrous modes
And vain, foul customs from the East,
And paying their prepond'rous gold
To buy a name, or buy a badge.
Oh shame! ye sons of those esteemed,
Illustrious fathers whose great deeds
Immortalized their precious names
In marble cold and hearts so warm.
And whose dead sacred mute bones from
The threshold of eternity
E'er curse your selfish, aimless lives."

That is what caused thy misery,
That is the life's boat on which thou
Had cargoad all thy love and hope;
That has been tempted by the depths

And sailed with all her buoyancy,
But smitten by just one gale, young man,
It wrecked and dashed thy heart and all
Against the ragged shoals of grief
On which thou lie now sad, forlorn,
Bemoaning all thy youth away.
Wake up, young man, prepare to hear
What might to thee sound wondrous strange.
'Tis time, young man, we should awake
To our gross errors and atone
For our imprudence and our pride,
That have hoodwinked us in the race.
We've set a higher prize to things
So worldly transient and so vain,
And turned to heaven's concerns our backs,
And in great many ways we all
Have misapplied our ample means
And swerved our efforts toward the wrong,
The very system of our thoughts;
The very education we
Do suckle with the childhood milk
And glean in schools and galleries
Of knowledge is deficient, wrong;
It banished idealistic truth
And made us worship matter in sooth.
Oh 'tis that flatt'ring, wheedling and
Seductive "code of interest."
It has its own dupes 'midst our ranks
That preach its gospel zealously,
So unaware of myriad crimes
That lurk beneath its airy wings.
Trace wrong and folly to their depths
You'll find there couching interest.
Trace revelry, trace vanity,
Trace luxury, trace recklessness,
Trace selfishness, debauchery,
Trace misery, trace all known crimes,
There at the bottom interest you'll find.
Is it then meet, young man, to build
Our superstructure of progress
On such a dangerous quick-sand?
But this is what we have achieved,

We teach it to our guiltless child,
Who'll make, no doubt, the morrow's man;
Thus sow in his receptive mind
The very seeds of selfishness.

The pendulum had swung with lack
Of "interest" and thence produced
The bleak, dark ages of the past:
And dealt a fatal blow to all
The possible culture of the mind.
But in the present age it knocked
With "interest" the other extreme
And dealt a fatal blow to all
The possible culture of the heart
And shut the gates of "heaven within."
It then drove men to horrible grotts
Of sordid dry religion and
To virtue's prairies where he hoped
To win the promised paradise.
It now drives men to revel with sin
Hoodwinked by pride to stroll upon
The highways of materialism
In hope eternity to win.
O, twin poor, grov'ling, straying worms,
O, crude, erratic beings, alas!

This is what made thee shed thy tears
And sob with an incessant grief;
What made thy days as dark as nights,
Thy nights as sleepless as thy days.
'Tis interest, eccentric, wild
That swept in its resistless flood
All patriotism, virtue, love.
'Tis interest that played its course
In childhood years unhinder'd, free,
Whence passions let so loose without
The slightest impressive command
Had erred, were ditched and went a prey
To worldly vain concerns of wealth.
Now here, so helpless as we are,
We stand and watch our wealth consumed
And squander'd in base, wicked pursuits.

This is the odious spirit that
Fills many a home with misery
And makes our courts our busiest shops
Our jails as crowded as our schools
And our grog shops and filthy clubs
The graves digged for humanity.
Alas! young man, if this our dear
Great, lovely fatherland be doomed
Before we take up to our guard;
For though my eyes with age are dim
My mind, distracted and decayed,
Lo! there above the dim profile
Of time a gath'ring storm behold,
E'er bigg'ning dark'ning creeping on
With a terrific weight that might
Crush down the very pillars that
Hold up our social dignity.
Waste not thy time 'mongst sighs and tears,
Go teach the world in words and deeds
To stand for virtue and for love,
'Tis sweet to shed a tear and breathe
A sigh when our dear ones are missed.
'Tis sweet to love; 'tis sweet to love,
'Tis holy, sacred and divine;
But let us not depart with love
And pour it off in wasteful tears
But keep it e'er within our hearts
To purify them and redress
The wrongs and inclements of time.
Thrilled up by his kind helpful words,

Absorbed in their immaculate truth,
That like a pealing voice from heaven
Stirred up the elements in my soul,
And like miraculous seasonal clouds
Precipitated in my breast
The deluge of another life.
I mused and roved and roved again,
Then suddenly stood up on my feet,
Addressing him with humble words.
But all alone I was! He left
No trace! I searched amongst the trees;

I rushed down toward the fount, but none
 Was there; I climbed the hanging cliff
 And cast around a watchful gaze,
 I saw him plodding his steep way
 Up yonder hill through bushes and thorns,
 Supported by his staff and lead
 By his big, sprightly, tireless dog.
 He looked to me like virtue's ghost
 Fighting its arduous course in life
 And tramping down the snares of sin,
 Triumphant, marching heavenward.
 I felt a godly stir within,
 And on that high, commanding cliff
 Under the crimson evening sky
 Down on my knees I knelt and prayed
 And pledged my heart and life in sight
 Of nature, that did echo my cry
 And time that ceased his hurried fly
 Smiling above the reddish west
 To encore my true, humble prayer,
 "O Rosaline, I'll live to pray
 For thee and love to live and do
 Thy will, O God! Thy will, O God!"

* * * * *

The fall succeeded summer, and
 The snowy winters usher'd the spring.
 The fields did bud and flower and bloom.
 Rich harvests came; rich harvests went.
 The leaves let fall again their leaves.
 Thus time drew toward eternity,
 And life drew nearer to its goal.
 The days were bright'ning cheerfully
 And filling the once sad heart with peace.
 The sable hue of life exchanged
 With pearly dawn that did announce
 The brightness of the soul within.

The orchards bloomed three times; the young
 Apple tree that Rosaline and I
 Had planted in weird youth grew tall
 And almost shaded all our porch.
 Our pet sheep did give birth to three

Young lambs with coats as white as snow.
The first was very dear to me;
I loved him so I called him "Rose,"
And always hang (to make the name
More fit) upon his horns a flower.
The past was still so dear to me
You see; its shadows often stirred
My meditations: but its gloom,
All its despondence and despair
Could not becloud the peace that reigned
In my new heart or shake the trust
My Saviour breathed within my soul.
The tangible objects, time and space,
The Ego and the Self are not
The only fact realities,
That form, the universe—there are
Invisibilities that rule
All matter, life and time and space
And do establish harmony
To their reactive entities
And keep the human in direct
Communion with the ones on high.
It is true and established that
The outer tangible things reflect
Upon the hearts contentment, joy
And pleasure; but all these fade out
When habit holds a sway upon
The frail nerves of our mortal coil.
Not so with that eternal joy
That takes its rise within the soul,
Replenished by the grace divine;
That like an ever-flowing stream
Floods out all sorrow and despair.

I had a constant cheer within
My heart no day brought in new cares,
No night new terrifying dreams.
Not that big Mother Nature changed
Her stable, uniform old laws.
But that my soul gave up her whims
The papers never failed to trace
And give exhaustive long accounts

Of Rosaline's in married life.
To journalism that was not
A mere dry, private, stale event.
Nay, was indeed a national one,
A vivid symposium of the faults
And follies of our vain home life.
I read all that and marvelled at
The gossips that did fill the land
And did to me first sound so gross.
One writer stated that the gold
Which Rosaline had squander'd with
Her count would weigh three thousand pounds.
Another wrote, "Her fortune would
(If nobly have been used) effect
Converting millions back to Christ."
A third one wrote: "Our fleet is not
As strong as ought to be. The hulls
Of some of our big battleships
Are not enough thick-plated with
Strong steel, for when in time of war
The crew and ammunitions get
On board they sink and show up but
Few inches of protected hull.
The gold that she has wasted in
The bars and cafes of Europe, would
If to equip our fleet bequeathed,
Give us the strongest naval force."
What those surmises had in them
Of worth, I did not know, forsooth.
I was then chiefly more concerned
About her home life, and the way
Her count was wont to treat her in.
All that, alas! read out a sad
And shameful, vile disgrace.
They had no mutual, trustful love.
She did suspect him and he did
Suspect her of the sycophants
Of whom each kept a petted horde.
He married her to get her gold
She married him but to assume
His social title; but at last
When all her millions dwindled out.

And when behind his title she
Met all the woes of scand'lous life,
Dark Hades gulped within their souls.
A cutting of their marriage tie
Was by the papers predicted,
And it was rumored that her folks
Would not restore their prodigal child.

Few weeks elapsed but nothing new
Was told about her status till
One Sunday morning when I took
The paper and glanced rapidly
O'er its first title page on which
My glance caught in what read like this:
"Confined in bed out on a farm,
Attacked with fever, Rosaline,
The Countess of ———, the daughter of ———,
One of our multi-millionaires,
Deserted by her count, is now
A victim of continuous spells
That might result in heart collapse.
She is nursed by a mother and son
Who were somehow connected with
Her, as they say, when they were poor.
The doctors gave no hope that she
Will e'er recuperate." The rest
Was soaked off in my tears. I ran
Down to the depot and got on
The train that soon was off amidst
The outskirts of the town, and though
She dashed like lightning I wished she
Would take the fire that was raked in
My heart and bear me sooner to
The presence of fair Rosaline.

The whole face of the farm was changed.
The fields that but few years before
Had been all cover'd with weeds were then
All ploughed and terraced and fenced around,
And green with grass and gay with flowers
And blossoming shrubs of various plants.

I stole in 'midst the piles of hay,
And went around from shed to shed,
But could not find my way therein:
I went about and traced the road
That Rosaline and I did take
When once we visited that spot.
I found the rock that she sat on
Before we went into the cot,
And saw the little shrub on which
She leaned and whose little green leaves she
Touched with her gentle hand; and saw
The very stone I stood on then
When laid my cheeks upon her lap
And listened to her sweet words and watched
The drops of sweat that glided o'er
Her rosy cheeks and fell upon
My face with sacred soothing charm
That will outlive eternity.
The brook that murmur'd by that rock
Was lending still a boundless charm.
I also found the greenish toad
Still leap from hole to hole, then post
Himself upon a stone then dive
Into the water, then spout out
And sing his loud ancestral croak,
Just as when Rosaline stood there,
And listened with a pensive mood
And praised the God of Nature who
In every form of life has placed
A soothing form of happiness.
I also saw the pebbles grind
And chafe as ever in the brook,
And whirl around, then tumble down
Into the gliding current, and
Wash off into the ocean wide;
Just like all other molds of life
That struggle with time, and living their share,
Glide on into the infinite.
All that dear spot was heeded by
The cruel hands of time, for love
Divine was hov'ring o'er its seats;

But all around it man's great hand
Had wrought extensive change in sheds,
In bowers, in fences and canals;
Thus could no further trace my way.

A column of smoke that slowly furled
And floated in the sluggish air
Above a bunch of trees, to me
Did then suggest the dwelling place.
I walked on toward the smoke, and soon
I found the road that led me to
The mansion Rosaline stayed at.
On knocking at the door an aged,
Tall, stately woman soon came out
With a rich smile upon her face.
We recognized each other, but
I was amazed at that big change,
That proved to me how God ne'er fails
To help his trusting children, and
"Does never mock a mother's tear."
She told me then how Rosaline
Was anxious to see me, and how
She often, on her bed of pain,
Had sung of our past, happy days.
"This morning," said the mother, while
Wiping her feeble eyes, from whose
Deep wells the tears gushed forth, "she is,
Poor Rosaline, in critical swoon.
We fancied for a time we lost
Her, but about an hour ago
She woke up, and begged us to send
For you; but we, not knowing where
You live, we then attempted to
Console her, but all was in vain.
We prayed to God, and ere our knees
Sank to the floor we heard your knock.

She led me through the parlor to
A large adjoining room, where, on
Her bed lay Rosaline, as pale
As death, and drooping like a flower
That faced the autumn of her life.

She smiled when I approached her side,
And stretched out her pale hand to me,
Whose grasp I felt in my hand like
A fluffy lump of melting snow.
Her eyes and mine met in a glance
At which each turned his face aside,
And wept the remnant of our tears.
"The fault was mine," cried she, and gave
Herself up to her sobs, with which
Her soul was nearly gushed away.
Feeling what error I fell in
I 'proached her with a loving tune,
And cheered up her sad heart, and said:
"My Rosaline, (if yet thou do
Allow this friend to call thee his)
My Rosaline, save thy dear self,
And live again for love and me."
"Too late, too late," she mutter'd to me;
"Too late, beloved, for I've now passed
The threshold of existence, and
Now stand upon eternal soil.
But oh! beloved, how drearily
The grave yawns to receive my soul!
How horrible that Ghost of Death
That comes to pluck my heart away!
How dark the world I fall into!
How fearful! O! my God, my God!
O let me live betwixt thine arms!
O guard me 'gainst this hideous death
That'll snatch me from thy bosom, dear."
"O Rosaline, dear Rosaline,"
Cried I with broken voice, "Lay all
Thy burden at the Saviour's feet,
For e'en the darkest valley of death
Will brighten at his loving smile."
"Too late, beloved, for what will that
Repentence of the wretch'd avail
Him while he slumbers in his grave?"
"Nay, Rosaline, thou ne'er have been
So wretch'd and lost that God's wide grace
Cannot encompass and restore
Thy soul to his salvation fold."

'I have denied my Christ, beloved.
I have, on death bed, spurned his grace;
And mocked His bleeding wounds upon
The cross of human cruelty;
And scorned His humble death for me;
And doubted God's infinite love
And His infinite mercy; and
Hurled down with my blaspheming hand
All Godhood, wrapt with heaven and earth
Into the dark, eternal nil,
And buried my soul in their remains.
I have committed suicide"!
And poured the acid in my throat.
'O, dying, wretched woman, Alas"!
Cried I and fainted by her side.
Awakened by our host's good care
I took the pale, dear Rosaline
Between my arms, and wiped off with
My kerchief her bright, pearly sweat.
"Shall we send for the pastor, dear?"
Resumed I with a pleading tune,
To which she gave a nodding consent.
In a little while the pastor came
In, holding in one hand the Book
Of Truth, and in the other his staff.
He looked quite old, and "crowned with all
The chaste and snowy glow of age."
He smiled on us, who gathered around
Fair Rosaline's death bed, and laid
The Holy Bible in her hand.
She hugged it to her breast, and laid
On it a silent kiss and wept.
He beckoned to us, and we all knelt
Down at her bed and listened to
His touching prayer that seemed to pierce
All fathoms of space, and reach the throne
Of God, and bring his peace and love.
We rose up and a heavenly light
Was fluttering o'er her face, and her
Sweet lips were muttering hopeful songs.
We listened and heard her last sweet words:

“While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O my Saviour hide,
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last!”

Her cheeks waxed red, she ope'd her eyes
And gazed at me with her most bright
And radiant glance, then a rich smile
Swept o'er her face and carried her
Into the great eternal world.

Beneath a maple tree that grew
And wafted its fresh fragrant breeze
Beside the murm'ring cottage brook
We buried Rosaline, and strewed
The flowers o'er her grave, and wept.

How little! that tender piece of flesh
That in the human breast resides,
And calls itself a heart; yet how
Grand and incomprehensible
It fills itself with virtue, truth,
And pure, divinely chastity.
At other times with vice and dreams,
Absurdities and chimeras.
It beats in life, it beats out death,
It beats aversion to mankind,
And beats what angels sang to earth
That sweet and lulling strophe—Love.
It is the lovers' wrecking boat,
'Tis a tumultuous ocean dark;
'Tis a bright, lovely firmament;
It is the heaven within us;
It is the dismal, dark abyss,
The dusky, drear hell into which
Humanity hurls down itself.

O dear old seats of love and joy,
In whose most sacred bosom did
We shed the happiest tears of youth!

What wither'd thy gay and fragrant flowers,
Ye meadows of the days by-gone,
Where oft we frolicked and beguiled
The passionate storms of love and youth?
Ye bowers installed and decked all o'er,
And trimmed by her enchanting hands;
That shaded us on summer days,
And 'mongst her roses and her twigs
Did hide our endless tales of love.
Ye leaves and buds that thrived so long
On her benign and balmy breaths,
What wither'd and nipped thy life away?
What silenced, what did sadden thy songs,
And trillings ye linnets of the past?
O chirping birds, what made thee weep?

Ye Church of the great living God,
Ye virtue's pure, solitary child
That rear thy steeples in thy sky,
And hail the world with peace, good will;
That ever lulled my burning zeal
With peace so sweet and so benign.
Ye pews where often to her side
And in the shadows of her dreams
I sat and spoke my prayers and sighed,
What made thee lose thy charm and bliss?
What did to thee thy grief impart?

What filled thee with a gloomy spell,
Ye rocks, and cliffs, and dismal coves,
Ye breakers that with their white foam
E'er muffle the barren, sullen shore,
And heaves the fath'mless, gloomy depths,
And stir my gazing soul to rove
As they our old dear haunts embrace,
Smooth off her footsteps on the sand,
Or murmur softly, sadly and
Splash up the memories of the past!

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